

The President's Radio Address *February 20, 1993*

This is Bill Clinton. As you know, this week I sent Congress my economic plan to create new jobs and to lift the living standards of Americans and their children. This morning I want to talk with you directly about it.

Let's begin with the children. If you're on your way to soccer practice or to take your children to a grocery store, if you can see from the window of your apartment children riding bikes or tossing a snowball, you know why we care so much about our schools and our neighborhoods and why we feel so strongly about being able to give our children what they need in life. We've always been a strong and caring nation where families worked hard to pass on something better to their children, and where government accepted the responsibility to support the efforts of families and the futures of our kids. But for too many years, our families have struggled without the help they need.

Our Federal Government in Washington has spent more than it had, run up huge deficits, and yet done nothing during difficult economic times to help families and their children. We neglected our economy and those very efforts like education, health care, training, and nutrition where national investments today pay big dividends in the future. Gridlock here in our Capital between the parties and among all the special interests has simply blocked progress, leading us to the politics of least resistance. A lot of people talked about change, but it never came. I hope those days of business as usual are over.

This year can be different with your help. I've presented a plan to grow this economy, a plan that takes America in historic new directions to improve the lives of our workers, our businesses, and our families. We can cut the deficit and increase investment if we have the courage to make changes.

Let's begin with investment. My proposal invests in infants and young children in programs that guarantee big returns for every dollar spent. For example, I've asked Congress to approve an immunization program to reach all children under the age of 2 with the shots they need to fight preventable diseases like polio, measles, tetanus, and the mumps. Every \$1 invested

today saves \$10 in the future in preventable childhood diseases. But today, of all the countries in our hemisphere, only Haiti and Bolivia have lower immunization rates than the United States. We can do better.

I've also recommended a maximum effort for nutrition programs to help pregnant mothers have healthy babies, and full funding for the Head Start program, the most successful early education program our country has ever seen. Again, we know now that \$1 invested today will save \$3 in avoidable health and education problems for these children in the future.

I believe our families must also again enjoy the rewards that come with productive work. Under our new direction, the working poor will rise out of poverty. Welfare recipients will be trained for work, not welfare. And because families must also take responsibility for their own children, there will be tougher requirements for parents to pay their own child support, including stiffening our collection procedures and identifying parents when the child is born.

And to restart America's economic engine, our primary and principal goal, we'll take several historic steps. We'll reward investments in small business with a permanent tax credit and fund new research and development. We'll create new incentives for bigger business to always be investing in high quality equipment and the best training and jobs for their workers. We'll create a better environment for all of the private sector, both business and agriculture and self-employed people, through deficit reduction, lower interest rates, and better trained workers. We'll build enterprise zones and community development banks across the country so that investment capital can flow to people and to forgotten neighborhoods desperate for the chance to grow. And I'd like to put hundreds of thousands of idle people back to work right now, repairing our public works and building the new infrastructure of tomorrow. As our plan restores the economy to health, millions more jobs will be created. These are the values and goals our plan is designed to accomplish. They reflect an economy that puts people first.

But you must all be wondering how we'll provide the means to reach our goals. First, we'll

cut wasteful or inessential Government spending. I've cut the White House staff by 25 percent and told the Federal agencies they must cut \$9 billion in administrative waste and to reduce personnel slots by 100,000. I've asked Congress to freeze the salaries paid by Federal Government workers next year and to match the administrative cuts that I've proposed for the Government agencies. They've agreed to match those administrative cuts, and I hope they'll agree to the other budget cuts, too. I don't like asking for these contributions, but I have to deliver to you a leaner Government and a more vibrant economy in return.

I do propose to raise income tax rates, but only for the top 1.2 percent of taxpayers, those taxpayers whose taxes went down in the 1980's while their incomes went way up. And our overall tax proposal will cost a family of four with an income of \$40,000 less than \$17 a month.

Finally, I will cut almost \$250 billion from more than 150 domestic programs, many of them with some merit, and from the defense budget.

Now a lot of interests will argue that these cuts are too steep. Still others will say they're not enough or demand that we protect their

pet projects while cutting someone else. To all, I say the same thing: Give me real cuts; don't waste the people's time anymore. I'm committed to cutting every bit of spending we can from programs we don't need or can't afford. And I won't raise taxes without cutting spending. But tell us exactly where you want to cut, and I'll gladly listen.

It's time to put politics aside and put America first. It's been years since our Government fought for working families and gave them a system where they could thrive and pass the American dream on to their children. It's time to include all Americans again, to build a new prosperity, not because we want new wealth for the Government but because we want to renew the dreams of our children, all of them.

I'm determined to take us in a new direction, and I ask you to join me in this fight for the future. Support your elected Representatives who are demonstrating the courage to change. If you do, we can write the next great chapter in the history of the greatest country the world has ever known. Thank you, and good morning.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Remarks at the Children's Town Meeting

February 20, 1993

The White House

Peter Jennings. Mr. President, one of my first impressions here is that this is an awful lot bigger than what you were used to living in Arkansas.

The President. It's bigger than almost anybody in America lives in, but it's a beautiful house. You know it was started in 1792. President Washington authorized it to be built, and then before it was finished, actually, President Adams and his wife moved in here. So it's been here a long time.

Mr. Jennings. Right behind us here, of course, we can't go in this morning, but it's really one of the most beautiful rooms, the Blue Room, looking out onto the Jefferson Memorial.

The President. It's very beautiful. And upstairs, just above it, there's another big oval room which President Franklin Roosevelt used

as his office during World War II. And now we use it for formal receiving of foreign dignitaries. And it also looks directly out on the Jefferson Memorial. And there's a porch there that President Harry Truman put on, so I can go out at night now and look at the lights shining down on Thomas Jefferson's head. It's a wonderful sight.

Mr. Jennings. You know the White House staff is very discreet. When I asked them if you sneaked around, sticking your heads in various rooms at night, they said, "Ask him." Do you wander around at night?

The President. I do a little, not so much down here but up on the second and third floor. And I spent a lot of time working, in this last month, over around the Oval Office, so I'm in the Cabinet Room a lot and in the Roosevelt Room, which is the President's big staff room. And